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14 January 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT : Post Mortem on the Czech Crisis

1. General Taylor's memorandum (attached to USIB-D-28.1/6 of 13 December 1968; received in OSR on 13 January 1969) notes that "the Soviet actions during the period of May-August 1968 offer a unique opportunity to study the procedures utilized by the USSR to conduct military operations." It recommends "intensive further study of the evidence be made by an objective group." And it suggests "the establishment of an ad hoc group established solely for the purpose and staffed by representatives from CIA, DIA, State, NSA, the military services and possibly the JCS."

2. The proposal to regard the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia as a case study and examine it in detail is a good one. The Joint CIA-DIA Study Group, as part of its comprehensive analytical attack on the Soviet and Warsaw Pact ground forces, has in fact already done some work on the subject. More work has been planned and steps to gather together all the information related to a detailed after-action survey have been taken.

3. I propose that the study recommended by General Taylor be assigned to the Joint CIA-DIA Study Group. The Joint Study Group would be responsible for defining the terms of reference, levying requirements upon collection and processing agencies such as NSA and NPIC, undertaking the intelligence analysis, discussing the draft report (or reports) with interested persons, and submitting the study to USIB for noting. In this way, the work would be done by the intelligence analytical components most qualified to do it.


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4. The interest of CIA and DIA in the whole Soviet venture culminating in the movement of Warsaw Pact units into Czechoslovakia lies in its relevance to our efforts to analyze the capabilities of the Warsaw Pact forces in the Central Region opposite NATO. This is the only context in which the proposed study makes any sense. To do it as an exercise related to warning as such would be an inefficient use of relatively scarce assets. Properly done, the warning implications will come out of the analytical work on Soviet and Warsaw Pact capabilities as illustrated by the event.

5. State, NSA, the military services, and JCS probably will be able to contribute to the information gathering process. NSA is particularly important in this regard. These agencies do not, however, have the capabilities to analyze the problem on an all-source basis. The Joint CIA-DIA Working Group does have these capabilities and has demonstrated its effectiveness in dealing with problems like this.

6. CIA and DIA are committed to moving ahead on a broad front in providing the OSD, the JCS, and NATO with intelligence analysis that will aid in the appraisal of the relative force capabilities of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The Joint CIA-DIA Study Group still has considerable work to do toward this end. The study of the Soviet actions during May-August 1968 is integral to this work, it has already begun in the Joint CIA-DIA Study Group, and it should continue there.


Director
Strategic Research